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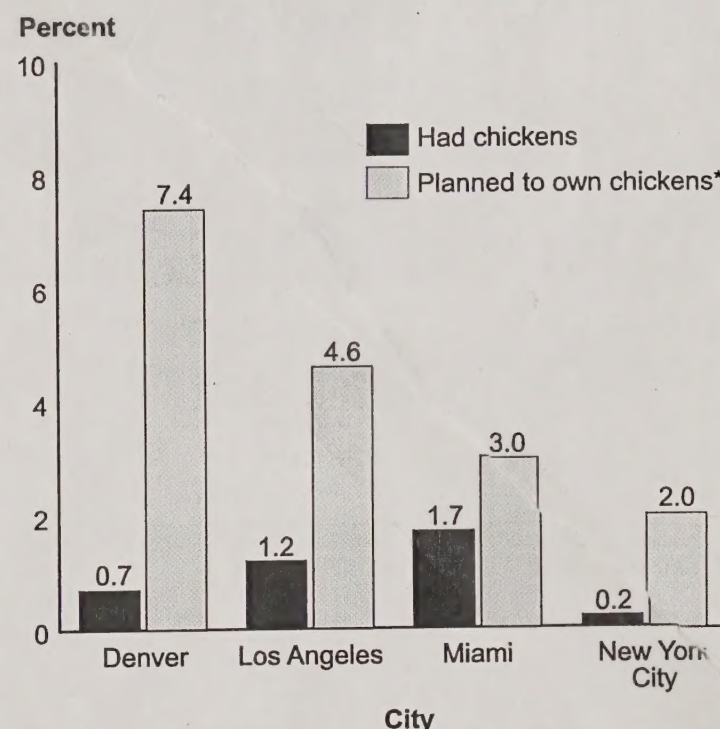
Highlights of Urban Chicken Ownership in Four U.S. Cities

The USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) conducted a study to determine the percentage of households in four U.S. metro areas (Denver, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York City) that owned chickens and to describe the residents' opinions about raising chickens in urban settings. Raising chickens in urban environments is a growing phenomenon in the United States. Urban chicken flocks are not part of the commercial poultry industry; however, they sometimes provide chicken meat and eggs to local food systems such as farmers' markets. Urban chickens represent an avian population for which very little information is available. An understanding of the level of urban chicken ownership could be important in the event of a disease outbreak such as avian influenza or exotic Newcastle disease (END). For example, the 2003 END outbreak in southern California involved many urban chicken flocks.

Here are a few highlights from the study:

- Averaged across all four cities, 0.8 percent of urban households owned chickens ranging from 0.2 percent in New York City to 1.7 percent in Miami (fig. 1). Chickens were owned on 4.3 percent of single-family homes on 1 acre or more. Excluding single-family homes on 1 acre or more, the percentage of households with chickens was 0.6 percent, ranging from 0.1 percent in New York City to 1.3 percent in Miami.

Figure 1. Percentage of households with chickens, and percentage of households that planned to own chickens in the next 5 years, by city



*For households that did not currently own chickens.

- While less than 1 percent of households had chickens, nearly 4 percent of households without chickens planned to have chickens within the next 5 years, illustrating the growing acceptance of urban farming (range: 2.0 percent of households in New York City to 7.4 percent in Denver).
- Overall, about 4 of 10 respondents were in favor of allowing chickens in their communities and would not mind if their neighbors owned chickens (44.4 and 39.3 percent, respectively) [fig. 2]. These percentages were lower for older respondents compared with younger respondents. Denver had the highest percentage of respondents in favor of allowing chickens in the community (62.5 percent).



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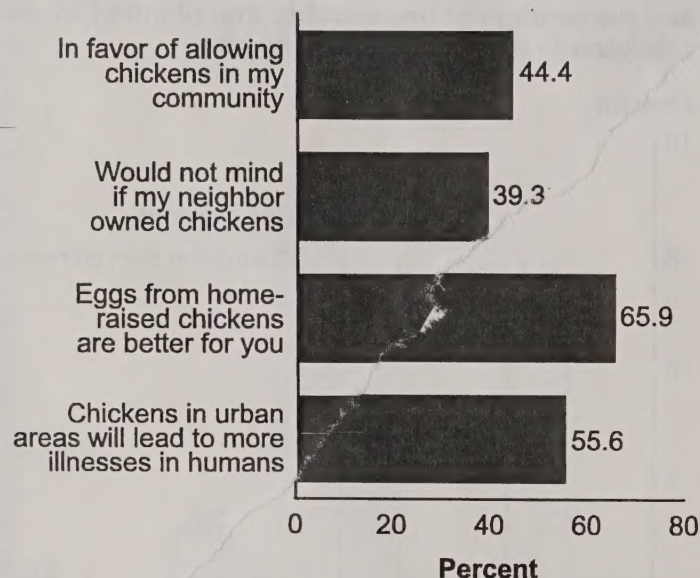
- Although over half of respondents (55.6 percent) believed that chickens in urban areas will lead to more illnesses in humans, about two-thirds of respondents in Los Angeles, Miami, and New York City and three-fourths of respondents in Denver believed that eggs from home-raised chickens are better for you than eggs purchased at a grocery store. Denver respondents were the least likely to believe that chickens in urban areas will lead to more illnesses in humans.

For more information, contact:

USDA-APHIS-VS-CEAH-NAHMS
 NRRC Building B, M.S. 2E7
 2150 Centre Avenue
 Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117
 970.494.7000
<http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov>

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Figure 2. Percentage of respondents that agreed* with statements regarding chicken ownership



*Slightly agreed, agreed, strongly agreed. Opinions reported here are those of respondents, not those of APHIS.

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